

SENATOR PLATT WAS GAY OLD LOTHARIO

Mae Wood on the Stand in Her Own
Behalf in Breach of Promise
Suit

"TOM" WROTE LOVEY DUCKY NOTES

Woman Tells About Marriage Which
is Alleged to Have Been Performed
in Newport Hotel—Letter in Which
He Denied He Was Ever Going
to Marry.

(By Associated Press)

NEW YORK, May 18.—Mae Catherine Wood was on the witness stand all day today testifying in her suit for absolute divorce from United States Senator Thomas C. Platt before Justice O'Gorman in the Superior Court.

In support of her assertion that she had been secretly married to Senator Platt at the Fifth Avenue hotel on November 9, 1901, her counsel introduced in evidence a marriage certificate which she said had been hidden to her by the minister who performed the ceremony; and copies of a number of letters alleged to have been written to her by the senator, addressed in terms of endearment. She testified that Mr. Platt first promised to marry her at Manhattan Beach.

"He said the marriage must be secret as he was an old man," added the witness. "I demurred and told him he knew nothing about me but he said he knew all my past life."

Miss Wood said she had two letters from Senator Platt but that one of them was demanded from her by J. Martin Miller and another man in October 1903, and that she had never seen it since. Her counsel showed the witness a typewritten copy of a letter and she identified it as containing practically the contents of the missing letter. It was offered in evidence and admitted despite the objections of John B. Stanchfield, Senator Platt's counsel. The copy was dated Friday, November 8, 1901, and read in part as follows: "My Little Bride to Be: I have made all arrangements. You are not to say anything to anybody. You are to obey my instructions implicitly. I enclose card to the hotel. You will be there at four o'clock and have room 158. I am an old fool but you shall never regret this step."

(Signed) "Tom."

The witness said she waited as directed, that Senator Platt came to her with two men, that he embraced her and introduced her to the men.

Tells About "Ceremony."

"I took his hand," said Miss Wood, "and one of the men began the civil ceremony by saying: 'You take this woman to be your lawful wedded wife and you take this man to be your lawful wedded husband.'" Miss Wood said that Platt gave her a wedding ring, and she displayed the ring in court. It bore no inscription. She declared that she thought the man who performed the ceremony was a minister and that he gave a marriage certificate. This alleged certificate was offered in evidence. Following the ceremony the witness said she remained at the hotel for three days, and then returned to her duties.

The marriage, she said, was not made public because Mr. Platt wanted it to be kept secret.

"He would not let me have a lady friend even," said Miss Wood, "for, he said, 'what two women know is no longer a secret. He wanted me to live in the next room to him and say that I was his secretary, but I refused.'"

Several copies of letters alleged to have been written by Mr. Platt were read by Miss Wood's counsel. They were addressed in terms of endearment and signed "Faithfully yours Tom."

In a letter from Washington, November 8, 1901, was the phrase "your letters have buoyed me up so that I am reconciled to O'Fallen's election."

The writer told Miss Wood not to worry about his children as they are all taken care of and that he can do as he pleases. His first wife, he wrote, had saved up something and it was divided between his sons and himself and he had told them he would not take one cent of it.

Sent Kisses by Thousands.

Another clause in the letter was: "I sent you a thousand kisses for the one you sent me."

A picture of the senator on the back of which was written "To My Little Wife" was offered in evidence.

"How was that written?" asked Miss Wood's counsel.

"Well, I was sitting on his lap. Part of the time I held his hand. We wrote it together. The words 'little'

wife' were written by him, I think."

On cross examination Miss Wood said she was 42 years old, was born in Michigan, has been married and divorced and has been a newspaper reporter, a school teacher and a lawyer. She did newspaper work in Omaha and also was admitted to the bar in Nebraska. She last saw the senator to speak to him on August 18, 1903.

Senator's Side of It.

Counsel for Senator Platt produced letters alleged to have been written to Miss Wood by the senator. In one of these letters the senator asked Miss Wood why she does not marry Mr. Middleton and says he would like to see her married before he "cashes in." In another letter the senator told Miss Wood to ask for writing about "Old Janeway" and told her that he knew all about Mrs. Janeway, that Miss Wood was entirely wrong and concluded "I have no intention of marrying Mrs. Janeway or any other woman."

Miss Wood denied that she ever received O'Fallen's letter of Richmond, Va., to prepare a case against Senator Platt, but said she had met them and talked about the case.

Thereupon Senator Platt's counsel read a letter from the lawyers to the senator, in which they declared that they had been employed by Miss Wood relative to a claim against the senator.

"The matter grows out of a promise of marriage made by you to her and broken as shown by your subsequent marriage to another person," says the letter.

Gave Up Papers Under Duress.

On cross examination Miss Wood told how she came to give up the papers and letters she possessed relating to Senator Platt, alleging that she did so under duress and was compelled to sign a receipt for \$10,000 in settlement of all claims against the senator. She said she did not get \$10,000 but did get a portion of it. Mr. Stanchfield offered the release signed by Miss Wood to Senator Platt in evidence.

Counsel for Miss Wood objected but the release was admitted. Miss Wood, in her complaint declares that she was married to senator Platt in this city, on November 9, 1901. She names as correspondent in her suit Mrs. Lillian Janeway, who was married to the senator in 1903. In his answer to the complaint the senator declares that Miss Wood's allegations that she married him about November 9, 1901 in New York are absolutely false. Senator Platt was not in court today. The case will be continued tomorrow.

Kept Open on the Sabbath.

In the police court yesterday Charles Nachman, a Hebrew merchant, was fined \$5 and costs for keeping his place of business open on Saturday, the Hebrew Sabbath.

Queer in His Head.

Most of Saturday night, while the prosecutor and the detectives had Zastera on the grill, the Bohemian pretended that his mind was a blank as to everything that happened at the Sheppard place Saturday morning. He told them over and over again that he had not been right in his head since the time he was seriously ill several years ago, and the doctors had to operate on his head. There were times when he forgot things, and couldn't make himself remember. As to other occurrences, he was perfectly rational, and had names and dates at his tongue's end, from 6 o'clock until 8 or 9 o'clock on but he could not remember anything Saturday morning.

Finally when Mr. Stokes and detectives were worn out, Zastera suddenly dropped his head in his hands.

"I see it now, I see it now," he cried. "I see it now; it comes back to me."

"Did you kill them?" the prosecuting attorney shot at him.

"I did," said Zastera. "I wanted money. I knew Mr. Sheppard had a lot of money in the big leather purse he carried on the inside of his coat pocket. It came to me all at once to kill him and his wife that morning when I got up to milk the cow. I hadn't thought of it before."

Stole Master's Gun.

"I got out of bed about 5 o'clock, dressed myself and went out to the barn to milk. While I was milking I thought of a plan to get the money. I knew where Mr. Sheppard kept his guns, and I thought I could handle a repeating shotgun that he often used himself. One time he let me shoot it at crows and taught me how to handle the pump that throws the dead shells out."

"So when I got through milking I carried the pails into the kitchen and down into the summer house and set them on the ground. Jennie Bendy was up getting breakfast ready in the kitchen, and I heard Mr. and Mrs. Sheppard stirring upstairs. I think I heard the baby crying, too."

"Then I slipped into the house and got Mr. Sheppard's gun, saw that it had six cartridges in the magazine and hid myself in the parlor. It seemed to me that Sheppard would come downstairs first, but that morning Mrs. Sheppard was the first down. She was in her night gown, and I watched her while she went back to get the baby some milk."

Shot Mother First.

"When she returned to the front

CRAZED LABORER SAYS HE MURDERED THREE

Half Witted Bohemian Farm Hand
Confesses to Killing William B.
Sheppard Wife and Servant

ARCHFIEND TELLS BRUTAL STORY

Self-Confessed Murderer, Believing
His Employer Had Money, Stole a
Gun and from Hiding Place in Par-
lor Shot Mrs. Sheppard and Her
Husband, Then the Maid.

(By Associated Press.)

NEW YORK, May 18.—Frank Zastera, the half-witted Bohemian farm hand who went to work for Lieutenant William B. Sheppard last Thursday night, near Whitehurst, N. J., has confessed to Prosecutor Andrew A. C. Stokes that he murdered Sheppard, Mrs. Sheppard and their servant girl, Jennie Bendy, Saturday morning.

She shot Mrs. Sheppard first as she was going up stairs in her night dress with a bottle of milk for the baby, and when Sheppard rushed down the stairs to his wife's aid, Zastera raised the magazine shotgun and let Sheppard have a charge full in the breast. After that he ran around to the back of the house, where Jennie Bendy, the servant girl, was getting breakfast, and shot her through the heart.

Prosecutor Stokes and the detectives got the confession from Zastera after ten hours of solid questioning. He sat stolidly hour after hour, denying that he had anything to do with the crime, and unmoved even when they showed him the blood-stained clothing the three victims had worn. Mr. Stokes had Zastera peel off his coat and put on the vest that Lieutenant Sheppard had worn. The blood was hardly dry upon it, but Zastera never turned a hair.

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Shot Mother First.

"When she returned to the front

of the house with the bottle of milk and started to go up the front stairs I stepped out of the parlor. She saw me and screamed and I shot her. The first load went into her hip or side, and she fell in a heap by the steps. Then I shot her again as she lay there, and I guess she shot went into her head."

"Mr. Sheppard, who was dressing, ran out of the bed room and was half way down the stairs before I got the gun up to my shoulder. He was a big man and I was afraid he would get me, I was afraid he would tear me to pieces if I didn't shoot quick, and I pulled the trigger while he was jumping down stairs. The charge struck him when he was about the middle of the steps and he just fell straight down and toppled over Mrs. Sheppard's body. I shot him again to make sure he was dead, some place in the body."

"Jennie Bendy had heard the shooting and when I got around to the kitchen she was standing by the door that opens into the summer house, just looking at me. I pulled up the gun and fired at her, and she tumbled down the short flight of steps and lay on the ground in the summer house, right by the cans of milk I had left there. I didn't shoot her again."

"After that I went upstairs to the bedroom and put my hands in Mr. Sheppard's coat pocket, where he kept his wallet. There was money in it, a good deal, I thought, but I didn't count it. I took it out and dug a hole between two locust trees in the front yard."

Forgot the Baby.

"Why didn't you kill the baby?" somebody asked Zastera.

"I don't know," he said. "I never thought about the baby."

They asked him particularly where he had hidden the money. He repeated that he had hidden it under the locusts, then he said his mind was going back on him again, that he had concealed it in the barn. This morning Prosecutor Stokes and the detectives drove out to the farm and searched where Zastera had indicated, but they found nothing.

While Zastera was telling his story he looked none of them in the eye.

"Why don't you look at us while you talk?" asked Mr. Stokes.

"I can't think when I go that," he said. "I've got to keep my hand over my eyes. If I let the light into them, it makes me forget what happened."

Now and then as he talked he rambled off into consequential things, which had nothing to do with the murder, and they had to bring him back to the matter at hand. He talked without much display of emotion, his voice flowing along evenly even when he described how Mrs. Sheppard, the lieutenant and the servant girl were shot down.

Afraid to Run.

"Why didn't you run away?" they asked him. Why did you stay there when you knew the chances were you would be suspected?"

"I figured all that out for myself after I had killed them," the Bohemian said. "I was sure that I would be caught if I tried to run. There were too many farmhouses around ours, and so many people were up already and along the road that I was certain I would be seen and run down."

Zastera was in the yard Saturday when the farmers came running to the Sheppard place, and for hours nobody gave a serious thought to the possibility that he was the murderer. When they decided to hold him as a witness at least he got frightened and begged them not to be too hard on him, saying that he was only a half-witted boy, who meant nobody any harm and who had nothing to do with the murders.

WEST VIRGINIA NAMES
CHOICE FOR MASTER

Hon. J. W. Yerkes, of Kentucky, or
Congressman Littlefield, of Maine
Would be Satisfactory.

(By Associated Press)

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 18.—In the Supreme Court of the United States today former Secretary Carlisle, representing West Virginia in the controversy with Virginia, presented a motion for a modification of the decree of the court appointing a master to take testimony.

The names of Hon. John W. Yerkes, of Kentucky, former commissioner of internal revenue, and Congressman Littlefield, of Maine, were suggested in behalf of West Virginia for appointment as master.

Gold for Export.

(By Associated Press)

NEW YORK, May 18.—The export of gold for export to Europe continued today. Goldman, Sachs & Co. took \$750,000; Heidebrecht, Heidebrecht & Co., \$250,000; and the Russo-Chinese bank, \$250,000, making a total of \$1,250,000 since the movement began.

METHODISTS STAND BY OLD DISCIPLINE

Conference Delegates Turn Down
Bishops' Proposition to Sanction
Dancing and Card Playing

WILL PROBABLY ELECT 8 BISHOPS

Committee in Charge of the Matter
Will Report for the Increased Num-
ber—Time Not Ripe for the Unit-
ing of the Southern and Northern
Churches, Says Committee.

(By Associated Press.)

BALTIMORE, MD., May 18.—It is reported tonight on what seems excellent authority that the report of the committee on the Episcopacy which will be presented to the Methodist Episcopal General Conference tomorrow, will recommend the election of ten bishops. Hitherto it has been generally believed that the number recommended will be eight, but within the past few days owing to the publication of figures showing the great cost of the Episcopacy, the impression has become prevalent that the number of bishops elected would be less than eight.

While the sessions of the committee are private, it is understood that a portion of the committee favored recommending that seven bishops be elected while the remainder advocated ten and that the latter have prevailed. The present bishops are said to have favored a smaller number than any of those mentioned—six, in point of fact. However, there seems a probability that when the report is laid before the conference the number finally decided upon and elected will be eight.

The Discipline Clause.

Second only in interest to the election of bishops perhaps is the final action of the paragraph of the church discipline relating to amusements touching on the address of the bishops which recommended the exclusion of dancing, card playing and certain other words from the paragraph. By a decisive vote the committee on the state of the church to which the matter was referred decided to recommend that the paragraph on amusements remain as it now stands and thus negated the recommendation of the bishops.

The vote in committee was nearly three to one against making any change.

Memorial services in honor of the bishops and officers of the general conference of the Methodist Episcopal church who have died during the past quadrennial occupied the greater portion of the day. Before the memorial service began a report of the committee on the state of the church on international peace was read and adopted. It reviewed briefly the things accomplished by the international conference held at the Hague and disapproved the maintenance of large standing military forces by the countries of the world. The time for organic union between the Methodist Episcopal Church and the Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has not yet fully come in the judgment of the committee on federation, and was set forth in a report ready for submission to the general conference.

One Step Toward Federation.

The committee, however, concurs in the recommendation of the joint committee on federation concerning a practical method of putting federation into operation. This provides in brief that where there are churches of the two branches of Episcopal Methodists they may unite if a majority of the membership of both branches desire.

The committee concurs also in the recommendation of the joint commission on federation for the appointment of a federal council for two churches. The Methodist Episcopal Church, South, has already agreed to appoint members to the federal council.

Another report of the federation committee recommends that the committee on federation be continued and that it be empowered to investigate the "United Brethren and such other branches of Methodism as it may believe are sympathetic to conference through similar commissions concerning federation, or organic union as in the judgment of the said churches respectively may be most desirable."

Consolidation with the colored

branches of the Methodist church and appointment of a committee to consider this subject is recommended.

BODY OF SOUGHT FOR GIRL FOUND IN CANAL

Body of Bertha Vanderbilt, Assistant
Librarian at Princeton, Dragged
From the Water.

PRINCETON, N. J., May 18.—The body of Bertha Vanderbilt, the pretty assistant librarian at the Princeton Library, was dragged from the bottom of the canal between Princeton and Kingston today. Men with grappling irons had been dragging the canal since the girl disappeared last Wednesday.

Shortly after the finding of the girl's body it became known for the first time that she was engaged to be married, and that the wedding was to have taken place sometime next month. That much the girl's father admitted, but refused to say who the man was to whom she had been engaged. He lives in Amsterdam, N. Y., the girl's native town, and her parents, home.

BISHOP VAN DE VYVER NOT TO LEAVE VIRGINIA

Accedes to Resolutions Presented to
Him to Withdraw His Resigna-
tion as Bishop of Diocese.

(Special to The Daily Press.)

RICHMOND, VA., May 18.—It is an open secret that Bishop Van de Vyver will accede to resolutions presented to him tonight and withdraw his resignation sent to the Pope in January as bishop of the see of Richmond.

The venerable Catholic dignitary stated this morning that should his people desire him to do so, nothing would give him more pleasure than to spend the remainder of his days in this city.

The resolutions followed a mass meeting of citizens held in the Bijou theater last night.

Baptists' Convention Ends.

HOT SPRINGS, ARK., May 18.—After a night session devoted to addresses from members of the Osage and Pawnee Indian tribes and from Mexicans on the Texas frontier, interpreted through field workers of the organizations the fifty-third annual session of the Southern Baptist convention came to a final adjournment.

NO RESERVE JUST YET

House Members Agree to Refer
Question to a Commission.

NICE SUMMER OUTINGS FOR THEM

Members of the Commission Will In-
vestigate Matter During the Recess
of Congress and Not Report to the
President Later Than January 1.

(By Associated Press)

WASHINGTON, D. C., May 18.—As a substitute for all the Appalachian White mountain forest reservation bills that have been introduced at this session the House commission on agriculture agreed today to report favorably a bill creating a commission of investigation. The commission is to consist of five members of the House and five members of the Senate and it is authorized to inquire during the summer recess into the project of Federal acquisition of some millions of acres of timbered and cut-over lands in the Appalachian and White mountain chains for the preservation and improvement of the navigable streams having their sources therein.

For the expenses of this inquiry the bill appropriates \$20,000. The bill also contains section 8 of the last Lever-Corrier bill, which provides in brief that owners of such lands may enter into an agreement with the department of agriculture whereby the latter shall guard the lands of the former from fire and the owner shall yield to the department the right to say how and how much of the timber on those lands shall be cut. One hundred thousand dollars is carried in the bill to make this clause effective.

The proposed commission of inquiry is to report to the President by January 1, 1909 and the President is to report promptly to Congress the purpose being to carry into action the recommendations of the commission and the President at the next session. Friends of the project declared today their belief that the new bill, which will be reported tomorrow will be enacted at this session.

MRS. GUNNESS ALSO TOOK WOMEN'S LIVES

Autopsies Show That the Murdered
Female Who Came to House
—for Jennie's Lison

SEVEN DEAD TO BE BURIED TODAY

Victims of the Laporte Fiend Which
Have Not Been Identified Will be
Laid Away Today in the Potter's
Field—Search for the Woman Will
be World Wide.

(By Associated Press)

LAPORTE, IND., May 18.—Autopsies of the seven unidentified bodies exhumed from Mrs. Belle Gunness private burial ground were completed today and they revealed the fact, according to the reports of Dr. F. T. Wilcox and George R. Osborne, who conducted the autopsies under the direction of Coroner Mack, that one of the seven was a female.

This revelation aroused new interest in the story that a man and a woman came to the house one night in 1904 to take Jennie Olsen to a Los Angeles college, as Mrs. Gunness told those about the place. The next morning Jennie and the man and woman were gone. Mrs. Gunness said that they had left on an early train for California. The body now declared to be that of a woman was taken from the same hole as was that of Jennie Olsen.

In that hole also were the bodies of Ole Bulsberg, of Iowa, Wis., and that of another man. The theory now advanced is that Mrs. Gunness may have on the same night murdered Jennie Olsen and the man and woman who had come to take her to California and buried all three bodies dismembered, in the same pit. The body of Bulsberg, who was murdered later than this night, was found near the surface.

Mystery About Watch Cleared.

The mystery surrounding the watch found on Ray Lamphere, when he was arrested, was cleared today when J. G. Ramden, of Manfred, N. D., who came yesterday to investigate the disappearance of his half brother, John Moe, of Elbow Lake, Minn., identified the time piece as the one owned by Moe when he left home. Lamphere said that Mrs. Gunness gave him the watch. The bodies of the seven unidentified dead will be buried tomorrow in the potter's field. The body of Jennie Olsen has been turned over to relatives.

Ole Bulsberg's body was today shipped to Iowa, Wis., for burial. Coroner Mack is still holding the four bodies found in the fire ruins of the burned Gunness home, and which, according to evidence, produced are the bodies of Mrs. Gunness and her three children.

The Laporte county grand jury today heard the stories of a number of witnesses in the Gunness case.

Excellent progress was made, but the greater part of the week will be consumed in the investigation. In view of the offer of the county commissioners to pay \$4,000 for the production of Mrs. Gunness alive, Prosecutor Smith expects that this search will be world wide.

ROGERS FLOATS NOTES FOR TIDEWATER ROAD

Sells \$17,000,000 Worth and \$10,000,000
of It Will be Used in Redeeming
Old Paper.

(By Associated Press)

NEW YORK, May 18.—Henry B. Rogers, of the Standard Oil Company, has sold \$17,000,000 Tidewater Company first lien five year 6 per cent. convertible gold bonds to Redwood & Company and the Equitable Trust Company of this city, according to an announcement made today.

The Tidewater Company has outstanding \$10,000,000 collateral trust notes which mature in 1909 but which are subject to payment on 30 days notice. These notes will be called immediately and retired.

Threw Child in Fire

NORFOLK, VA., May 18.—J. W. Lambert, charged with the throwing of an infant into an open fire, claiming it for life was today indicted by the grand jury of Princess Anne county on the charge of

The woman with whom he was living will testify.